

699.e.7 6
SOME
REMARKS
ON A
REPLY
TO THE
DEFENCE of the LETTER
TO
Dr. *WATERLAND*.

Wherein the Author's Sentiments, as to all the principal Points in Dispute, are fully and clearly explained in the Manner that has been promised.

The Intendment of my Discourse is, that Permission should be in Questions speculative, indeterminable, curious and unnecessary; and that Men would not make more Necessities than God made; which indeed are not many. The Fault I find and seek to remedy is, that Men are so dogmatical and obstinate in their Opinions, and impatient of other's Disagreements in those Things, wherein are no sufficient Means of Union and Determination: but that Men should let Opinions and Problems keep their own Forms, and not be obtruded as Axioms; nor Questions in the vast Collection of the System of Divinity be adopted into the Family of Faith: and I think I have Reason to desire this.

Taylor Lib. of Prophes. Ep. Dedie. p. 12. D. M.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. PEELE, at Lock's-Head in Amen-Corner. MDCCXXXII. Price 1 s.

1803

THE NEW YORK

REPUBLICAN

OF THE

NEW YORK

PRINTED BY
J. M. G. W. O. R.
AT THE NEW YORK
PRINTING OFFICE
No. 10 NASSAU ST.

R

F

DE

D

S

Y

print
to the
do you
pertin
much
past,
self t
for th
pain;
it; th
it wo
have

SOME
REMARKS
ON A
REPLY
TO THE
DEFENCE of the LETTER
TO
Dr. *WATERLAND*.

S I R,

YOU begin *your Reply* by observing;
that it was near twelve months before
the Defence of my Letter appeared in
print: yet you make *no exceptions*, you say,
to the length of time. To what purpose then
do you set out with an observation so im-
pertinent? Why; to introduce another
much more so; *that a longer time would have*
past, before you could have prevailed with your
self to have published such a Defence. And
for that matter, you need not be in any
pain; every reader, I dare say, will allow
it; that had you taken *twice twelve months*,
it would not have been in your power to
have produced *such an one*.

The next paragraph gives us a taste of *your vanity*: for you cannot hold out *ten lines*, without informing the reader, that you have forced me to *recant and plead guilty* to the charge of a *false quotation*: and lest it should be forgotten, you repeat it a few pages after, and once more *renew your triumph* over me ¹. And here, whatever credit it gives you, or whatever shame it brings to myself, I must confess it to be true; that I have *recanted*, and *owned myself guilty of quoting falsely*, as you say, or as others will think, *too negligently*, in one instance: and had it been proved upon me in many more, would have owned it as readily: nor am I desirous to give any check to your pleasure, by observing, that it was in a point of no consequence; for had it been of much greater, I should have retracted the more freely: the only use I shall make of it, is to shew the difference of your conduct and mine on this occasion: for, pray Sir, what is it in this controversy that you have retracted? Have you in any once instance *pleaded guilty*, or *owned yourself confuted*? No, you *insist upon it, that you have advanced nothing rashly in your whole Reply* ²; *that you have made good every single instance of falshood charged upon me.*

As to the truth of what you *insist upon*; we shall be better able to judge of it by and by:

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 25.

² Ibid. p. 3, 4

in the mean while, as I am here considering the difference of your temper and mine, as to *pleading guilty* on fair conviction; I shall out of many instances, produce only *three* or *four*, in which you ought at least to have *pleaded guilty*; for if you have the Learning you pretend to, you must know yourself to be confuted; if the love of Truth and Religion, must know it your duty to confess it.

1. I had produced in *my Letter* a testimony of St. Stephen, to prove, that the *Egyptians were possessed of learning in Moses's time*¹. This testimony you treated with *such rashness*, as gave me occasion to charge you with overturning the very Foundations and *betraying the very Citadel of Revealed Religion*²; by supposing that a person *full of the Holy Ghost*, and under the *actual influence of a Divine Spirit*, could possibly assert any thing *erroneous*: and in this I was supported by the express declaration of Dr. Waterland himself, whose Defence you had undertaken.

Now what do you reply to this? Why, nothing at all directly; but mutter only somewhat in a *parenthesis*³; as if St. Stephen, when filled with the Holy Ghost, might not consistently affirm what was false of facts, that have no relation to the Christian doctrine.

¹ Letter, p. 23.
² Defence, p. 81.

² Defence, p. 71.

³ Reply

Which

Which is to allow in effect, that he might be full of the Holy Ghost, and full of error; full of truth, and full of falsehood too at the same time: a position, which no Christian will presume to defend; and which if I had but darkly hinted, the usual titles of *Freethinker* and *Infidel* would have been thought too soft for me. As in the case then of St. Stephen, all people were scandalized at your rashness; so your conduct would have been more edifying to the lovers of *Truth and Religion*, and more suitable to the zeal you pretend for both, had you endeavoured to repair that Scandal, by acknowledging your error, and pleading guilt to it; and not thro' a false pride and vanity which every man must condemn, sought to bear down all before you, by insisting, that you have advanced nothing rashly.

2. As to the fact itself, of the learning and politeness of the Egyptians in Moses's time after all your cry against me for the falsehood of my historical facts, it proved at last the only one, in which you attempted to fix the charge upon me, by the help of what you call Sir Isaac Newton's demonstrations and discoveries; where he has, as you declare demonstrated my notions to be false¹. In answer to this I have evinced the truth of my opinion so undeniably, from the testimony of all history, both sacred and profane; that

¹ Reply, p. 45.

every reader, I dare say, is convinced of it, and you yourself in fact allow it, by *leaving me in possession of the question*¹. But you do it with so ill a grace, with so much reluctance and shuffling about it, as takes off all the credit of a *liberal and ingenuous* concession. For after you had *rashly* advanced the *authority of Sir Isaac* above *Scripture* itself, which cannot possibly be true, unless his *Demonstrations*, as you call them, be false; instead of taking any blame to yourself, you throw it all upon me, for exposing that rashness and defending *Scripture*: for you labour to raise a clamour and envy against me for *insulting* Sir Isaac; and with your *usual rhetorick* movingly exclaim, *how low is the great Newton fallen! how ignorant in your opinion!* I have already declared my opinion of him to be as great, as I can possibly have of any mortal: yet the honour I have for his name must not deprive me of the privilege of judging for myself in all questions, that I am capable of understanding; and of thinking differently even from Sir Isaac, or any man else, as oft as the force of reasons obliges me. You dismiss the question by assuring me, that *whenever I shall be inclined to treat it more fully, there shall not want one, who will attempt to do justice to Sir Isaac's proofs*; and with this promise you leave me, as you say, *in possession of it*. But is not this a poor child-

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 42.

ish evasion; the stale shift of those, who having nothing to say or give, refer themselves to another time? Will the reader believe, that you would have *left me in possession* of any thing, you could have wrested from me? much less of a question, which bears the greatest shew of Learning, of any in the Controversy; and of that *single historical Fact*, which you had charged me *with falsifying*? If you had any real intention *to do justice to Sir Isaac's proofs*, why did you not do it here, when it was your business to do it, when you were challenged to do it? I have entered fully and freely into an examination of them; have produced all I had to offer on the subject; which, however *slight* you declare it to be, will be thought by every body else sufficient and effectual to confute you: nay, what's worse; you plainly discover, that you think so yourself; and stand condemned in your own mind, and punished by a *filly pride*, that will not give you leave to own yourself in the wrong.

3. You charged me *in your Reply*¹, with *falsely asserting the Golden Calf in the Wilderness to have been made in imitation of the Egyptian Apis*; and affirmed withal, that there was *no ground in Scripture-story* for my notion². In answer to which I observed, that the God *Apis* was worshipped in the *same form*, and with the *same cere*

¹ Reply, p. 46.

² Ibid. p. 47.

monies as the *Golden Calf*: and that I had with me the concurrence of all the learned, who had touched this question, as well as of the *most zealous and orthodox defenders* of Christianity. And from *Scripture-story* I shewed; that the *Idolatry*, by which the *Israelites* so often provoked God, is said to be such as *their Fathers had learned and practised in Ægypt*; that the *Idols* they were fond of, even at the time of making the *Golden Calf*, are described as *Ægyptian ones*; and that *St. Stephen* alledges this very case of the *Calf*, as an instance of their *turning back in their hearts into Ægypt*¹. Now can there be *any greater rashness* in a *Scholar*, than roundly to deny what men of learning from the reason of the thing and the testimony of history have been obliged to assert? Can there be *any greater* in a *Divine*, than to affirm, that *there's no ground in Scripture-story*, for what is so clearly confirmed by many texts of *Scripture*?

What then have you said to this in your Reply? Why, without giving any answer to my *Authorities*, or any other account of my *Scripture texts*; without alledging any *new Reasons*, or confuting the *old ones*; you stick firm to your point, and tell us plainly, that what you before said, *you still assert, that there are no grounds from Scripture-story*, to

¹ Defence, p. 83, 84. See Jerem. ii. 18. Ezek. xvi. 23. xxiii. 3, 8.

*think the Golden Calf to have been made in imitation of the Egyptian Apis*¹. How is it possible to deal with such a Writer, whose maxim, as oft as confuted, is to *assert still, and insist that he has advanced nothing rashly*?

4. But the next instance is still the most flagrant. In your *Reply to my Letter*, you will mention, you say, *but one mistake more of mine under this article*: very modest truly, to mention *but one*, where with the same truth you might have mentioned *twenty*. The mistake is; that I had asserted on the authority of the learned, that *Hieroglyphicks or sacred Characters were used in Egypt before Moses*: whereas you affirm, *Sir Isaac to have shewn, that they were not so much as invented till the reign of Rehoboam*². To this I answered, that *Sir Isaac* was so far from having shewn what you affirmed of him, that he had directly shewn the contrary; had expressly allowed the very thing I asserted, that *Hieroglyphicks were in use in the days of Moses*³.

And what have you *replied* to this? not *one syllable*. But will not every one reflect on what you ought to have *replied*? Ought you not to have recalled the mistake, *so rashly charged on me*, and taken it to yourself; and the more readily, for being so gross an one? Ought you not rather to have done any thing than *assert and insist* with such assurance that you *had advanced nothing rashly*?

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 43. ² Reply, p. 48. ³ Defence, p. 87.

that every single instance of falshood was made good against me¹? 'Tis such perverseness and disingenuity as this that confirms men in *Scepticism*, instead of convincing them; by *insisting* for ever on exploded nonsense and cramming down people's throats what all men of sense must nauseate. Is it possible after this to expect any thing candid or impartial from you in the way of argument? no, we shall not be deceived; you preserve a true unity of character through your whole performance; 'tis all of a piece; equal and uniform to itself from one end to the other:

———*Servatur ad imum,
Qualis ab incepto processerit, & sibi constat.*

To illustrate it a little farther:

The design of your *Reply*, as 'tis declared by yourself, was to set forth the *falsehood* of my *Quotations and Historical Facts*: and your very *Title Page and Introduction* prepared us to expect that you would make good your charge against *them all*. Yet I observed, that when you came to the particulars, all you attempted to cavil at were *fifteen, out of fourscore*; and that even *two* of that number had no reference to any quotation at all. Let's just consider, what you have *replied* to this. As to the *two instances* I exclude from your *list*, you are content, it seems, to exclude them too and *change the name if I do not like*

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 4.

it¹: but why then were they added to the account of *Quotations*, when they had no relation to it, unless to enflame and enhaunce a *false charge*? You say withal, that you did not intend to attack *all my Quotations*, but *my original ones only*². And by the instances you give, one would imagine, that by *original*, you mean *Latin and Greek ones*: as if my *English Quotations*, which you do not meddle with, were not as truly *original* as those taken from *Herodotus*. But you define more distinctly your sense of *original ones*; telling us, that they are such, as I have not taken *at second hand on the authority of other writers*; for you never meant to charge me with *second hand Quotations*, knowing that if they are false, the *Authors I take them from* are answerable for the falshood of them. Why then do you charge me with one drawn from *Maimonides*, on the authority of *Spencer*; and which *Spencer*, you say, took from *Buxtorf*³? Is not this by your own definition doubly a *second handed one*? Why do you charge to my account likewise⁴ another taken from the *Rabbins*, on the authority of *Lightfoot*? Is not this too a *second hand Quotation*? So that your *Reply* in this case, as in most others, is so shuffling and inconsistent, as shews you determined at all adventures rather to defend every thing *rashly*, than yield up any thing *ingenuously*.

¹ Reply to Def. p. 32. ² Ib. p. 6. ³ Ib. p. 28. ⁴ Ib. p. 30.

'Tis not worth while to follow you again thro' all the cavils of *your first Reply*, which you now repeat and insist on in *your second*. A Controversy would be the business of life, if we must treat it at this rate, and dwell for ever on the same facts. I have already said enough on each, and am content to leave the merit of it to the judgment of the reader : however, to shew you that I have no other reason for declining any debate or argument you offer, but merely to save time and cut short unnecessary squabbles, I shall run over again with you *two or three* of your instances, where you fancy yourself the strongest, or have added some *new force* to your former exceptions.

You urge then afresh in *your second Reply*, with regard to what I have quoted from Cicero; *that Cicero's true Sentiments are not to be found under the character of his Academic Speakers*¹ : and tell us withall, *that it was on this very Article that the Author of the Discourse on Free-thinking received such chastisement from Phileleutherus Lipsiensis, that you never expected to see any one so venturesome, as to assert the same thing again*. And I readily allow, that the *Free-thinker* you mention received a very proper correction from *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*; whose great learning likewise I am as ready as yourself to acknowledge: but I assure you, Sir, that at the time of

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 8.

writing

writing *My Letter*, I did not recollect what either of those Authors have said on the Subject; but used on this, as on all other occasions, the right I claim of judging for myself: yet I am apt to think, that the *Learned Writer* we are speaking of, either does not insist so much, as you imagine, on what he has advanced, or thinks it at least consistent with the use I make of *Cicero*, from the principle he himself lays down; *that the reasoning is the same, from whatever quarter it comes, and the Authority not the less, though transferred from Cicero to a Stoic*¹; for 'tis very credibly reported, that on reading *My Letter to Dr. Waterland*, before any name had been mentioned of the supposed Author, he did in very strong terms express his approbation of it.

But to return to the question: *Cicero* is allowed on all hands to have been a *professed and sincere follower of the Academy*: this he declares, in every part of his Works, and owns himself indebted for all the *Talents and Abilities* he was master of, to the precepts and principles of *that Philosophy*. Where then are we to look for his *real Sentiments* on any question; but where that question is treated professedly and elaborately according to *the principles and maxims of the Academy*? This is the case in his *second Book of Divination*, where he disputes in his own person; and where he declares

¹ Remarks on Discourse of Freeth. Part II. p. 78.

tha

that the *chief purpose of that Disputation was to explode Superstition*; as it was likewise in his other *Book of the Nature of the Gods*¹: which is not applicable to any other part in *this Book*, but that only, which *Cotta* sustains. Dr. *W.* tells us, that *Tully's Disputants* in these very Books, *De natura Deorum, & de Divinatione*, debate in good earnest, and represent the sense of the several contending parties to the best advantage². And if so, then the Sentiments affirmed by *Cotta*, must be considered as the Sentiments of *Cicero* himself, as they were the Sense of the *Academic party* represented to the best advantage.

And as to the declaration, that *Cicero* makes in the end of *this Dialogue* in favour of the *Stoics*; I am still of opinion, that it may be considered as a compliment to *Brutus*, to whom this very Book is addressed; by giving a slight preference to *his Philosophy*; tho' himself at the same time really followed and preferred another kind³. But this you call *strange*, and wonder how I can suppose *Cicero* to have complimented with such insincerity⁴. But 'tis more strange, to hear a man of gravity talking so childishly. For what is it, I would know, that you take *Cicero* to have been? Some *Bigot perhaps* in

¹ De Div. l. 2. cap. ult.

² Script. Vind. Part II. p. 7.

³ Quod genus Philosophiæ minime arrogans, maximèque & constans & elegans arbitraremur, quatuor Academicis libris ostendimus, de Div. l. 2. 1.

⁴ Reply to Defence, p. 10.

Religion;

Religion; who reckoned it a point of Conscience, not to depart a tittle from the rigour of his principles : or some *Pedant in Letters* ; who thought it a diminution to his character, not to assert on all occasions the supreme prerogative of his own judgment. No, Sir, I impute no *insincerity* to him, but what is suitable to his high merit and character, such as would dispose him, for the ease and politeness of conversation, not to insist always on the strictness of his Sentiments, but to yield up somewhat even of his own persuasion, to do a civility or pleasure to his Friend. A behaviour, which, however *strange* to you, will hardly do him discredit with any body else.

But the words I quoted are so far, you say, from giving *Cicero's opinion*, that they do not so much as represent *Cotta's*, who speaks them : This notion I have already treated as it deserves¹ : but you insist upon it again, and enforce it by a new proof, drawn from what *Cotta* in the close of his argument says to his *Antagonist* ; *facile me a te vinci posse, certè scio*. From which you infer, that *Cotta's approbation of the Sentiments he had been asserting, is inconsistent with the declaration he makes of his knowing for certain that Balbus could confute him*². And here again you fall into the same mistake of treating a meer compliment, as if it were

¹ Defence, p. 10.

² Reply to Defence, p. 11.

a solemn and categorical affirmation. *A mere compliment*, I say; which every body who knows any thing of good manners or good sense will see at once to be such: though 'tis, I'm persuaded, *such an one*, as you will never make, of allowing any man *able to confute you*. *Cotta*, in closing his argument, throws it into the hands of *Balbus*, in a polite manner, by declaring, that *he knew it to be in his power to confute him with ease*: A civil turn of expression; very common on all occasions of easy debate, whether publick or private: yet you argue from *the strict sense* of the words, as if *Cotta* were declaring his *strict Sentiments*: in which you contradict the very authority you follow, of *Phileleutherus* himself, who says, that in this very *Book of the Nature of the Gods*, none of the disputants concede; all stand firm to their principles^r. Besides; whilst you lay so much stress on these words, and assert them *strictly* to bear, that *Cotta knew for certain*, &c. you forget what you had allowed the page before, that it was the peculiar character of the *Academy*, *to know nothing for certain*.

Again; to shew that the part assigned to *Cotta* did in fact contain *Cicero's real Sentiments*, I observed, that in his *second Book of Divination*, where he disputes in his own person, he takes the same side and uses the same arguments, to confute the opinions of the Stoics

^r Remarks on Discourse of Freethink. Par. II. p. 73.

*about Religion and Divination*¹. And here, after puzzling a while to find out my meaning, you suppose it at last to be, that *Cicero in this Book had disputed against Religion*: which you affirm to be false, and produce *Cicero's own words* to prove it². But whatever you affirm, or whatever you take *Cicero* to mean, I here again declare; that *Cicero in his second Book of Divination disputes against Religion*, as it was explained and understood by the *Stoics*; who held *Divination* to be an essential and principal part of it. If there are Gods, there is *Divination*, was fundamental with them; as you might have learnt from *Cicero* himself, who calls this very Article, *the fortress or citadel of the Stoical Religion*³. And to dispute against *Divination* was not only to dispute against *the Religion of the Stoicks*, but against the *popular or established Religion* too; which, as every one knows, was founded on the supposition of *the truth of Divination*, and most of its offices and ceremonies instituted on that sole foundation, which must of course fall to the ground, were *Divination* taken away⁴.

But how then, you'll say, are we to un-

¹ Defence, p. 9. ² Reply to Defence, p. 9. ³ Arcer tu quidem Stoicorum, Quinte, defendis, si quidem ista si recipiuntur; ut &, si divinatio sit, Dii sint, & si Dii sint, fit divinatio, *de Div. l. 1. 6.* ⁴ Cum omnis populi Romani religio in Sacra & in Auspicia divisa sit; tertium ad junctum sit, si quid prædictionis causa ex portentis & monitis Sybillæ interpretes, Haruspicesve monuerunt, *Naturæ Deor. 3. 2.*

derstand *Cicero*, when he declares in this same Book, that he has no design *to take away Religion*? Very easily; by considering him only as talking like a *Philosopher*: that though he was confuting the *superstitious notions of the Stoicks*, yet he did not mean by that to destroy *the Religion of Reason and Nature*, founded in the belief of a *God and his Providence*: and though he declared for preserving *the Rites and Ceremonies established by their Ancestors*; yet it was for reasons of policy, and the ends of government only; not that he thought them any part of *the true and rational Religion*, which men of sense ought to follow ¹.

You proceed to enforce an exception of yours, to a quotation from *Josephus*, about the use of *Circumcision in Ægypt*. Where I must recommend one general remark to the reader, and desire him to apply to *all your Cavils* of this kind; *viz.* that if on any occasion, thro' haste or eagerness, I have laid more stress on any *testimony*, than it will strictly and singly bear, yet 'tis always in cases, where I have either supported *the same fact by other full and clear authorities*, or where 'tis allowed and notorious, that it

¹ Nam & majorum instituta tueri sacris cæremoniisque retinendis sapientis est: & esse præstantem aliquam, æternamque naturam & eam suspiciendam, admirandamque hominum generi, pulchritudo mundi ordoque rerum cœlestium cogit confiteri. Quamobrem ut religio propaganda est, quæ est juncta cum cognitione naturæ; sic superstitionis stirpes omnes ejiciendæ, *de Div. 2. 72.*

can be so supported. So that whatever may be objected to the exactness of *any particular quotation*, it makes no alteration in the state of the question itself. This will be explained by the instance before us.

I had quoted *Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo*, to prove, that *Circumcision was universally practised by the Egyptians*; in confirmation of which, I added likewise a passage of *Josephus*; that does not, it seems, come up to the very point of *universal practice*: now without taking any notice of the other authorities, which establish the fact, you catch hold of this; run away with the cry of *false quotation*; and fancying, that you have got the reader on your side, and can now persuade him to any thing, you presently form an *Hypothesis* out of your own brain; that *the Egyptian Priests only were circumcised; that these Priests taught the Priests of other nations to be so too; and that it was not for the sake of cleanliness, as I translate καθαριότης, but of purity; just as it was among the Jews*¹. All which particulars I have severally considered and confuted². But this rude way of confuting does not please you; you call it *dropping the question and drawing off the reader from the charge brought against me*³. And 'tis indeed drawing off his attention from words to things; from trifles, to truth; not, as

¹ Reply, p. 15. ² Defence, p. 19. ³ Reply to Def. p. 16.

you say, by *dropping*, but keeping strictly to the merits of the question: which you are forced in effect to give up, by declaring here, *that whether the Egyptians were generally circumcised or no, is no material inquiry*¹.

To what purpose have you spent so much pains in inquiring about it? And why do you employ some pages of your *second Reply*, to prove the negative? Which you endeavour to do by the help of a fresh authority from *Josephus*; who in giving an account of the death of Apion, an Egyptian, tells us, *that he was forced to be circumcised on account of a distemper, of which he died*². Upon which you give this decisive and declarative sentence; *that it may suffice to shew, both that the Egyptians in general did not practise this rite, and that Josephus knew very well that they did not*. Yet this very fact, from which you decide so dogmatically, will be found at last very little to your purpose; and like some other authorities you alledge, tho' it has some shew, has no foundation. The thing asserted is, *that the Egyptians under the flourishing state of their ancient Monarchy and Religion were generally circumcised*: and you to confute it, oppose the case of a single *Egyptian*; which is not pretended to have happened, till after *their Monarchy and Religion* had been dissolved, and the

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 16.

² Ibid. p. 18.

Country

Country converted to a *Roman Province*. How judicious and conclusive such reasoning is, I shall leave to the reader.

But you tell me here, that *I have as ill luck as ever at quotations*¹; because I observe, that *Josephus makes no other reflection on the account Herodotus gives, of Circumcision's being borrowed from Egypt; than that of such things every one may think as he pleases.* This you affirm, to be a most false representation of the matter. To which I may answer, that whether it be true or false, it is of no consequence to any point in debate: The use I make of *Josephus*, is to shew, that in his account of *scriptural facts* he allows a greater latitude of interpreting and explaining them, than our modern Advocates do; and if he really does so, in facts of greater moment and importance to Religion than this, as I shall clearly shew hereafter; then the use I make of him is certainly just, however I have represented him here: but I shall insist upon it withall, that in this very case, 'tis not my representation but your charge upon me that is false. You imagine, that the reflection made here by *Josephus*, that of such things every one may think as he pleases; relates wholly to the Story of *Shisac's plundering the City and Temple of Jerusalem*; and to the question, whether *Herodotus* refers to the same event,

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 19.

no: and I allow, that the account of this story, and the proof of its being mentioned by *Herodotus*, make the substance of the paragraph: and what is said about *Circumcision*, seems thrown in by way of confirmation of it: upon which immediately follows *the reflection* above mentioned, that closes the whole: which, however applicable to the other contents of the paragraph, yet cannot be interpreted so, as to exclude a reference to the *case of Circumcision*, that immediately precedes it: nay, by all rational construction must be thought, if not solely, yet principally to refer to it; because as far as I have observed or can recollect of *Josephus*; tho' he uses the *same reflection* very often, yet he never applies it but to *some fact or point of great moment* to the truth or essential character of the *Jewish Religion*. Now as *the story of Shisac* in this paragraph is of no consequence to the *Jewish Nation or Religion*; so 'tis rational to think *the reflection*, 'tis closed with, applicable to the case of *Circumcision*, which is of consequence. But of this we shall be better able to judge, after I have explained my sentiments on the other more important passages of *Josephus*.

I shall just touch *another of your cavils*, which you insist on again in your *said Reply*. I had observed of the *Ægyptians*, that they were more addicted to miracles and prodigies, than all other people. And referred myself for

for the truth of my observation to a passage of *Herodotus*: in which I *deceive my reader*, you say ¹, *at the expence of a false quotation*. To this I answered; that the word *τέρατα* in the original, on which the sense of the passage turns, carries the notion of miracles, as well as prodigies; that a superstitious regard to the one necessarily implied the same regard to the other; and that in fact, it was certain from other authorities, that the *Ægyptians* were just as much addicted to miracles as to prodigies ². Now what do you say to all this? Do you deny any one article of it? No. Do you pretend to say that *τέρατα* does not signify miracles? No. You own it does. Do you shew or so much as hint, that the *Ægyptians* were not as much addicted to the one as to the other? No; all that you do, is to assert and insist still, that the word, *miracles*, is neither expressed nor implied in the sentence ³. For my part, in all Disputes of this kind, 'tis my care to attend to things, instead of cavilling at Words; and where I allow the general purpose of a testimony to be true, am content to overlook any little inaccuracies of rendring it; for if like you, I was disposed to squabble and fight my way thro' every syllable of a quotation, instead of the few you except to of mine, there is hardly a single one of yours, that I could not with the same truth charge with falsehood.

¹ Reply, p. 23, 24. ² Defence, p. 48. ³ Reply to Def. p. 22.

and misrepresentation. Let's take for instance the first Greek one we find, at the bottom of your page; which you translate thus: *for all the Ceremonies of the Temple, and a thousand other precepts would be neglected, if we were to confine ourselves only to the Allegorical Signification*¹. Now the word *All*, about which you make such a rout in both your *Replies*², is neither expressed nor understood in the *original*; nor is there any word that answers directly to, *Ceremonies*; nor so much as a tittle, that signifies *Precepts*; and what you translate, *a thousand*, ought to be rendered *ten thousand*; what you render, *confine ourselves to*, ought to be rendered *attend to*. Why then may not I exclaim here with as much justice as you do; *what gross misrepresentation is this*, where there are almost as many offences *against strict Translation*, as there are words? But I scorn to waste my time and pains in such trifling; shall give up all *that field of Criticism* to yourself; nor envy you the credit of Learning and Judgment that such arts can procure you.

As to your other Cavils at my *Quotations*, I shall leave them where they stand to the judgment of the Reader; and if he compares what I have said in defence of them, with the force of what you have objected, I need be in no pain for the judgment he will make:

¹ Τῆς περὶ τὸ ἱερόν ἀγιστείας καὶ μυρίων ἄλλων ἀμελήσομεν, εἰ μόνους προσέχωμεν τοῖς δι' ὑπονοσιῶν δηλαγμένοις. Ibid. p. 51.

² See Reply, p. 23. Item, Reply to Defence, p. 20.

the quotations themselves are produced to shew, that the Jews had borrowed some of their ceremonies and customs from Ægypt: this is the only point in question; and if you had replied to any purpose, or had any real concern for truth, 'twas your business to have joined issue on that; to have examined into the real state of it: which after two Replies you have industriously declined. The Fact has been constantly asserted by men of the greatest Learning, and the most conversant in both Jewish and Egyptian Antiquity; without any suspicion that the acknowledgment of it could be of any disservice to true Religion. Calmet, the most diligent of the modern Commentators, tells us, that as Moses came out of Ægypt, and the people, whose Leader he was, had been trained in all the customs, laws and religion of that country; it was not possible for him as Legislator to propose any thing to them, but in conformity to the ideas, impressions and habits they were prepossessed with. That they had a surprising inclination to Idolatry, from their education in an idolatrous country, where they gave themselves up to the established Religion with pleasure and greediness, as it was adapted to their genius, and agreeable to their inclination: and that we must attend to, and carry this notion along with us, in order to enter into the design and spirit of the Mosaic writings¹. Dr. Spencer's famed work on this

¹ Comment. Pref. Gen. p. vi. and p. x.

very subject is at this day greatly and justly admired in all *Christian countries*; and his zeal for *Revealed Religion*, so little questioned on that account, that Archbishop *Tenison* left fifty pounds by will, as a reward to the *Publisher of a new Edition* of it, with the *posthumous additions of the Author*; which we have seen not long since executed by a learned Divine: and to declare my own opinion of the fact; I take it to be so clearly grounded in the *testimony of History, both sacred and profane*, that if it cannot be looked upon as *absolutely certain*, yet it is at least so *highly probable*; that to deny it rashly and peremptorily, as some *Divines* are disposed to do, will always do mischief instead of service to the *Christian Cause*, by giving disgust and offence to candid and impartial inquirers. For nothing, as Bishop *Tillotson* wisely observes¹, has been more pernicious to the *Christian Religion*, than the vain pretence of men to greater assurance concerning things relating to it, than they can make good; the mischief of which is this; that when discerning and inquisitive men find that men pretend to greater matters, than they can prove, this makes them doubt of all they say, and to call in question the truth of *Christianity* itself.

'Twas this reflection, that gave rise to this Controversy; and the motive of publishing my *Letter to Dr. W.* was a persuasion, that he was pursuing the very method con-

¹ *Tillotson's Works*, Vol. III. p. 452.

demned by the Archbishop; taking *greater matters* upon himself *than he could prove*; dogmatizing with *greater assurance* of things than he could *make good*: and the intention of my address to him was to shew him the danger of what, in my judgment, he had *rashly* undertaken and was *rashly* executing; and not to declare *any sentiments* of my own: to convince him, that his *arbitrary manner* of deciding questions of the utmost nicety and difficulty; by not allowing *the least colour of reason or probability* to any objections; but imputing them all to the *ignorance, malice and wickedness* of the objectors, was not the proper way to *convince*, but to *shock* every rational Sceptick. It was with this view I proposed, what I have offered in *My Letter*, about *the History of Man's fall, Circumcision, the Confusion of Languages, the Dispersion of Mankind, &c.* in order to shew the *literal account* and solution of those facts to be charged with difficulties, sufficient to puzzle even the strongest reason: which, instead of being slubbered over, as trifling and insignificant, must be candidly owned and calmly and freely examined, before *Religion* can be established on a *firm and solid foundation*.

And 'tis certain at least after all our endeavours, that some things will be found in *Scripture*, which no wit of man can account for, or reconcile to *the natural dictates of reason*:

rea
dom
tim
obje
God
Mor
whol
will
Chri
mera
Whic
his E
dles,
to the
all ot
their
Bu
the
the a
pions
and p
there
all; t
to be
time,
wante
the Ra
Qua
bens, pr
scientia
Deo pot
ad Ctes
Bened.

reason : and which must be left to the wisdom of God to clear up in his own good time. *Porphyry*, as *St. Jerom* says, used to object and demand, for what reason a merciful God could for so many ages, from *Adam* to *Moses*, and from *Moses* to *Christ*, suffer whole Nations to perish thro' ignorance of his will and law : and why it was necessary for *Christ* to come so late, and not before an innumerable multitude of men had been lost ? Which question, says he, the blessed *Apostle*, in his *Epistle to the Romans*, most prudently handles, owning his ignorance, and referring it to the knowledge of God. Which ought to teach all others, as he says, the same modesty of owning their ignorance too in questions of this sort ¹.

But neither the example of the *Apostle*, nor the admonition of the *Father*, can restrain the adventurous Spirit of our modern Champions from undertaking this very question ; and proving, that, whatever *St. Paul* thought, there's no occasion to own any ignorance at all ; for that the fact objected is found at last to be false, and there really was no period of time, in which the Nations of the World wanted light and opportunity of knowing the Revealed Will and standing Law of God ².

¹ Quam quæstionem beatus Apostolus ad Romanos scribens, prudentissime ventilat, ignorans hæc, & Dei concedens scientiæ. Dignare & tu ista nescire quæ quæris. Concede Deo potentiam sui, nequaquam te indiget defensore, *Hier. ad Ctesiph. adv. Pelag. Op. T. IV. Par. II. p. 481. Edit. Bened.*

² See Scripture Vindicated. Par. II. Postscript.

But

demned by the Archbishop; taking *greater matters* upon himself *than he could prove*; dogmatizing with *greater assurance* of things than he could *make good*: and the intention of my address to him was to shew him the danger of what, in my judgment, he had *rashly* undertaken and was *rashly* executing; and not to declare *any sentiments of my own*: to convince him, that his *arbitrary manner* of deciding questions of the utmost nicety and difficulty; by not allowing *the least colour of reason or probability* to any objections; but imputing them all to the *ignorance, malice and wickedness* of the objectors, was not the proper way to *convince*, but to *shock* every rational Sceptick. It was with this view I proposed, what I have offered in *My Letter*, about *the History of Man's fall, Circumcision, the Confusion of Languages, the Dispersion of Mankind, &c.* in order to shew the *literal account* and solution of those facts to be charged with difficulties, sufficient to puzzle even the strongest reason: which, instead of being flubbered over, as trifling and insignificant, must be candidly owned and calmly and freely examined, before *Religion* can be established on a *firm and solid foundation*.

And 'tis certain at least after all our endeavours, that some things will be found in *Scripture*, which no wit of man can account for, or reconcile to *the natural dictates of*
reason:

reason : and which must be left to the wisdom of God to clear up in his own good time. *Porphyry*, as *St. Jerom* says, used to object and demand, for what reason a merciful God could for so many ages, from *Adam* to *Moses*, and from *Moses* to *Christ*, suffer whole Nations to perish thro' ignorance of his will and law : and why it was necessary for *Christ* to come so late, and not before an innumerable multitude of men had been lost ? Which question, says he, the blessed *Apostle*, in his *Epistle to the Romans*, most prudently handles, owning his ignorance, and referring it to the knowledge of God. Which ought to teach all others, as he says, the same modesty of owning their ignorance too in questions of this sort ¹.

But neither the example of the *Apostle*, nor the admonition of the *Father*, can restrain the adventurous Spirit of our modern *Champions* from undertaking this very question ; and proving, that, whatever *St. Paul* thought, there's no occasion to own any ignorance at all ; for that the fact objected is found at last to be false, and there really was no period of time, in which the Nations of the World wanted light and opportunity of knowing the Revealed Will and standing Law of God ².

¹ *Quam quæstionem beatus Apostolus ad Romanos scribens, prudentissime ventilat, ignorans hæc, & Dei concedens scientiæ. Dignare & tu ista nescire quæ quæris. Concede Deo potentiam sui, nequaquam te indiget defensore, Hier. ad Ctesiph. adv. Pelag. Op. T. IV. Par. II. p. 481. Edit. Bened.*

² See *Scripture Vindicated*. Par. II. Postscript.

But

But to resume what I was saying, of the *History of Man's Fall, the Confusion of Languages; and the Dispersion of Mankind*: As the first is a point of great moment, I shall take occasion to explain myself fully upon it by and by: in order to which, I shall here dismiss the *two last*, by desiring the Reader only to recollect the *Observation* made above; that I was not *declaring* here any *Sentiments* of my own, but shewing only the insufficiency of what was advanced by Dr. W. And if on this, or any other occasion, I have used a *greater freedom or levity of expression*, than is thought decent on *questions of such importance*; I hope it may be some excuse for me, that I was writing as a *person concealed*: a circumstance, that naturally disposes to more freedom, than a Man would otherwise take; especially when he hopes by that very means the more effectually to disguise his real character; as well as to raise an attention to what he has to offer by *some sting and spirit* in the manner of offering it. Dr. W. greatly contemns his *Antagonist*, for being *dull, insipid and without poignancy*¹: so that it was necessary for me to address him in a *different stile*; that if I did not happen to please, I might at least have the fortune to escape his contempt. With this reflection let the reader review what I have said on the *story*

¹ Scripture Vindicated. Par. II. p. 36.

of Babel; and he will see, that I have passed no *peremptory judgment* upon it; declared no other opinion but this; that *the origin of languages may, with some colour of reason and probability, be accounted for in a natural way.*

As for *the Dispersion of Mankind*, I am very certain, that *Dr. W.'s account and your defence of it will appear absurd and irrational* to every judicious reader: and as I do not find in *Scripture*, that there was any *miracle or extraordinary interposition of God* employed to effect it; so I think myself at liberty to solve and explain it in any manner agreeable to *reason*: what I have proposed to that purpose, is, in my judgment, a cause fully adequate to the end, and what could not fail to bring it about, as soon as there was occasion, from the *very nature and necessities of human kind.*

I shall now proceed to give some account of the use I make of *Josephus's Authority*; as well as to consider the force of your objections on this head.

In the first place then, you allow *Josephus* to have been a *wise and excellent Apologist of the Jewish Religion and Government*, and a *true lover of both*; and suggest several reasons, why it would not have been *prudent in him*, to have insisted strongly on *Moses's Miracles*, or the *Divine Authority of the Jewish Religion*; that he knew he was treading on dangerous ground;

ground; and that 'twas his business to guard against giving offence to the prejudiced Heathens; that in many parts of his *Antiquities*, where he relates a Miracle, he leaves his reader to think of it, as they please, without exacting from them a full belief of it: and in short, that in his *Book against Apion*, he wholly omits the mention of *Moses's Miracles*¹.

Now this, Sir, is owning much more than is necessary to justify the full use I endeavour to draw from him: that as he, whose sincerity in his Religion is confessed, and whose prudence in the defence of it applauded, allowed a liberty of thinking, and a latitude of explaining some scriptural facts of great moment; so our modern Advocates ought to temper their zeal with the same prudence, by leaving likewise some liberty in the explication of the same facts. And your own account proves my inference to be not only just, but temperate too: for I do not contend for the liberty which *Josephus* has given; but where he has given so much, that our Apologists might reasonably indulge some.

Josephus's design in his *Book against Apion* was, by your own account of it, exactly the same with *Dr. W.'s* in his *Book against Christianity as old, &c.* that is, to confute² the particular objections and calumnies of Infidels and prejudiced persons, who represent *Moses* as an Impostor, and his laws as making men

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 66, &c.

² Ibid. p. 67.

worse instead of better. Now if *Josephus* acted wisely in not pressing, as you say, too forwardly the Miracles and Divine Authority of Moses; but endeavouring by a prudent and dextrous way of treating those points to soften and win the Infidels to his side: then 'tis reasonable to infer, that Dr. W. not only might, but ought to have followed his example, in points at least of less moment: and such a conduct must have been esteemed in the Doctor, what you declare it to have been in *Josephus*; the effect of a sincere zeal and love for his Religion.

You tell us very gravely, that *Josephus* had no view either in his Book of Antiquities, or That against Apion to make converts to Judaism; but only to give the Greeks and Romans a favourable opinion of the Jewish Nation¹. But does not an elaborate Attempt to recommend his Religion as effectually as he can, and to turn the prejudices conceived against it into a favourable opinion of it, necessarily imply a design of making converts? If not, I am at a loss to know what other way there is of making any. The Bishop of Meaux's famed Piece, in which he dresses up so moderate and qualified a Picture of Popery, as to offend the Zealots even of his own Religion, was not written, you may say, with any view to make converts; but to give the Protestants only, a favourable opinion of the Popish Religion, and take off their

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 65.

E

prejudices

prejudices against it: but would not people be apt to laugh at you for saying so? The case is much the same in what you say of Josephus.

Your next observation is more trifling: that it would not have been safe for him to have acted otherwise; that his life was at the mercy of the Heathens; and to have pressed the Divine Authority of his Religion more strongly, would have been looked on as an open disparagement of the Roman Religion and Laws too. And what he says therefore of Minos was for fear of offending those, who had received his laws as given from Heaven¹. But was there then in Old Rome, as there is in the New, an Inquisition established for the security of the Publick Religion? Or what zeal could a Roman Emperor have for the laws of Minos, made so many ages before, for the little Island of Crete; which by that time, we may suppose, had been long antiquated? No, Sir, all this reasoning of yours has no foundation in truth or history; 'tis merely talking at random, and deserves no other answer, than that of ridicule.

As to the *Book of Jewish Antiquities*, the fact is; that Josephus, in order to take off the prejudice and aversion, which the World had generally conceived to the Jews, and to give the best impression he was able of their Religion and Polity, undertakes to draw out

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 66, 72.

a perpetual History of both, from *the Records of the Old Testament*, in a language at that time the most universally known and practised of any other: declaring, that his intention was not to vary a tittle from what he found in the Sacred Books; and that he was to be considered only as a mere Interpreter of them ¹. Now in the execution of this work you observe, that *Josephus expresses himself very plainly in many passages, on the Article of Moses's Inspiration and the divine origin of the Law* ². And reason good, that he should do so; where he professes to speak nothing but what the *Scriptures plainly dictate*: so that, as oft as *the Scriptures* have occasion to mention *the Inspiration of Moses*, so oft was he obliged to mention it too, from the very nature of the task he had undertaken: and in all such places we can collect nothing certain of *Josephus's real opinion*, but of the *sense of Scripture* only; which he had obliged himself to follow. But whenever he *varies from that Scripture*; as he does remarkably in many cases; *contrary to his own declaration*; and without any other reason than what depended on his own choice; and where in the relation of any fact, he gives a *different turn* to it, from what we find in the *Mosaick account*, 'tis there, we are to look for the *Sentiments and Principles of Josephus*.

¹ Procem. in Lib. I. Antiq. & Lib. X. c. x. §. 6.

² Reply to Defence, p. 65.

Now all men of learning observe, that *his History* is in many particulars *very different from that of Moses*; that *he adds some things* of his own; *wholly omits others*; and interprets most of them so, as to give them the easier credit *with the Heathens*; and this especially, in the *article of Miracles*. *Fabricius* has collected the censures of learned men upon him on this very account¹: and *Peter Brinch*, a learned *Divine* and critical reader of him, has given us his own; where he tells us, that it was a fault not uncommon with him, to relate the *Miracles from Sacred Writ* in such a manner, as to make them even doubtful and suspected². For instance; where he gives an account of the wonderful appearance of God on Mount Sinai, he interposes this reflection very usual with him; *of these things the reader may think as he pleases*; 'tis necessary for me to relate them, just as they are written in the *Sacred Books*³. To the story of *Nebuchadnezzar*, he subjoins the same reflection, *let no man blame me for delivering these particulars, as I found them in the old Books*: for in the beginning of my *History* I declared, that I acted only the part of a *Translator*, &c⁴. And in the next Chapter, after an account

¹ Vid. *Fabricii Biblioth. Gr.* l. 4. c. 6. it. *Havercamp. Edit. Joseph.* Vol. 2. Append. p. 57. ² Nec rarum Josephi istud vitium est, quod divina ex sacris literis miracula ita refert, ut dum refert, dubia lectoribus & suspecta reddat, &c. *Edit. Havercamp. ibid.* p. 301. ³ *Antiq.* l. III. c. v. §. 1. ⁴ *Ibid.* l. X. c. x. §. 6.

of *Daniel and his Prophecies*, he concludes the Book by saying; *for my part, as I have found and read these things, so I have written them; but if any man be disposed to think differently about them, he shall not be blamed by me for his different way of thinking*¹. Lastly, in the account of the Prophet *Jonah*, excusing himself, as it were, for delivering a story so strange, he *twice* puts the reader in mind that he writes only what he takes from the Scripture².

'Tis to no purpose to collect any more instances of this kind, or *the variations* he has made from *Moses*, or the *natural causes* hinted in the case of *some miracles*; or *his omissions* of some remarkable facts, as of the *Golden Calf*, the *Brazen Serpent*, &c. all supposed to be done with the same view of recommending his *Religion* to Strangers. The use I make of this is, to shew the truth of what I had gathered from *this very Book of Antiquities*, that his *real Sentiments of the Divine Authority of Moses* were not carried to that height, to which our *Divines* commonly push theirs: and this you modestly call, *the rashness of my assertion*, or *the negligence of my reading*³; though all men of learning allow; even those, who allow at the same time, as you do, that *Josephus was sincere and zealous in his Religion*. And if, *zealous* as he was, he took a *liberty* himself, and indulged it to others,

Antiq. c. xi. ad fin. ² Ibid. c. x. §. 2. ³ Reply to Def. p. 75.

others, of solving by different ways the great events recorded in *Scripture*; a conduct, which you, in effect, declare to be *wise and prudent*; it follows of course, that *the inference*, I made, is reasonable, and what I must insist upon again; that our *zealous Advocates of Christianity*, ought for the same reasons, of *not giving offence to Infidels*, and *hurting the cause they would vindicate*, to follow his example at least so far as to use *some degree of temper and moderation*, where he is justly thought to have used *too much* of it.

From this general view of *Josephus's Writings*, I come once more to consider *the particular passage* in dispute between us taken from his *Book against Apion*¹: which you call my *Master-piece of Quotation*. I had before observed that the dispute turned wholly on a *point of fact*, about what *Josephus had or had not said* in this place; and that I was not declaring *any opinion of my own*, but examining only *into that fact*. But as this caution has not proved sufficient to guard me from *envy and clamour*, so I must again beg the reader to attend more distinctly to the *true state of the Question*, and not to charge on me the *Sentiments*, which the nature of the Controversy leads me to charge on *Josephus*.

Now after a due examination of what you have offered in your *second Reply* to my

¹ Contr. Ap. lib. II. c. 16.

exposition of the passage before us ; I find myself obliged to persist still in what I had before declared ; that we cannot by any fair and rational construction draw out of this paragraph *any notion of the Divine Mission and Inspiration of Moses*, in that high sense of it in which 'tis commonly received, without the help of that *prejudice and prevention*, we come possessed with, in favour of the notion we search for. You tell us yourself, that *in this Book against Apion the invention of Moses's miracles is entirely omitted*¹ : and does not this concession prepare us for the very interpretation I give ? To confirm which, we are to consider the *general tenor and scope* of the paragraph ; to connect one part with another so, as to make them severally consistent with the obvious sense of the whole : and not to dwell, as you do, on the rigorous meaning of *two or three* words, which cannot be admitted, without controuling and over-ruling the clear sense of *an hundred*. But since much more has already been said on this passage, than the merit of it will justify ; I shall take notice only of *one of the difficulties* you charge in your *second Reply* ; since the clearing up of this will be decisive and effectual to the confutation of all the rest.

The difficulty I mean relates to the last sentence in the paragraph, which I have translated thus. *Some have thrown the form*

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 67, 68.

of their publick affairs into a Monarchy; others into the power of a few, or an Oligarchy; others into the multitude, or a Democracy; but our Lawgiver had no regard to any of these, but if a man may use an expression so forced, made the form of Government be instituted, a Theocracy¹. Where the last words I say, clinch the whole to the sense I had been establishing. But you object here, that I have falsely and absurdly translated the words, Θεοκρατίαν ἀπέδειξε, he made his Government, a Theocracy: whereas, it plainly signifies, what the Old Latin Interpreter gave; he declared it to be so; he proposed, and delivered it, as a Theocracy². And when the Words, you say are thus rightly rendered, they are very far from clinching the whole, or confirming my explication. Here then we join issue; if my translation be true, you will own it to clinch the whole to my sense; if yours appear to be so, I will retract and recall mine. The issue is short; let's proceed to the trial of it.

And as in all questions of this kind, the first inquiry ought to be about the turn and meaning of the whole connected sentence so we will first consider here, to what sense of the word, ἀπέδειξε, the context directs us. Josephus is giving a short hint of the form of the Jewish Government, in the institution of which he tells us, that the Lawgiver had

¹ Defence, p. 29. See the whole passage.

² Reply to Defence, p. 69, 70.

no regard to any of the different kinds subsisting in the World, whether Monarchy, Oligarchy, or Democracy: now these words, you will own, are applicable to Moses, acting authoritatively in his own proper person: but they are not only impertinent, but absurd, if what immediately follows is not to be applied so too: they lead us to imagine, that he was projecting a form of Government, and looking abroad into the world to consider the various kinds of it among other people; and that he resolved at last to take his pattern from none of them, but to make his own of a different kind from them all. For what could Josephus mean by telling us, that *Moses had no regard to any other form*; if he meant in the next words to tell us, that he had *no hand in the making even his own form*? 'Tis nothing at all to the purpose what he had regarded or not regarded, had it not been with a view to the making of a Government: and thus the context is not only impertinent, but inconsistent with itself, if your sense be admitted.

As to the word itself, ἀποδείξαι, I may safely appeal to all, who have a competent knowledge of Greek, whether in this place, and form of construction it ought not to be rendered to the sense I have given it; of making, constituting, appointing: and though it may have likewise that of declaring or proposing; yet it must be of something formed

F and

and constituted by him who declares and proposes it; and includes therefore at the same time the notion of making. Many examples of this may be found in the *Classic Authors*, though 'tis not easy to recur to them, as soon as they are wanted. One I have recollected from *Josephus* himself, in *Jethro's advice to Moses*; about placing Judges or Rulers over the people. The words are ἀρχοντας ἀποδείξεις, thou shalt make or constitute Rulers: and a little lower, he uses a different word of the same force, τάξεις, thou shalt appoint or place over them ¹. I have met with another in *Plutarch*, who speaking of *Lycurgus*, in the very case of moulding his Government, tells us, how by a method learnt in *Ægypt*, he made it at last truly elegant and perfect. Ἀσείον ὡς ἀληθῶς τὸ πολίτευμα, καὶ καθαρὸν, ἀποδείξει ². *Hen. Stephens's Thesaurus* furnishes several instances from *Plato*, *Xenophon*, &c. where he renders the word, by *facio*, *efficio*, *reddo*, *creo*, *constituo*: that is, to make, effect, create, constitute. I shall just mention one, where *Xenophon* speaking of the proper choice of Masters for the Youth, says, that such of the older sort used to be chosen, who were the most likely to make their children the best men: τὰς παῖδας βελίστας ἀν' ἀποδεικνύναι ³. And a little after, for the same thing, he uses, βελίστας παρέχειν.

¹ Antiq. l. 3, 4.

² Institut. Cyri. l. 1.

³ Plut. in Vita. Lycurg. p. 41.

But you tell us withal, that the *old Interpreter* had rendered this place, by *declared his Government a Theocracy: an Authority*, I doubt, that will add very little weight to your cause; *Scaliger* declares your *old Interpreter* to have been a *great blunderer* ¹. And for what reason have *the Critics* discarded him, but that they found him to be so; and his version here contrary to sense, and contrived only to serve an *Hypothesis*; which however true, cannot derive any additional credit from a *false translation*? Have not *Hudson* and *Havercamp*, the *learned Editors of Josephus*, translated the word, as I have given it? And did they not understand *Greek*, and the *Author* they have published? You must *reply* distinctly to all this, before you can make any impression in favour of what you advance. You must shew *the context* to give no colour to my exposition: you must shew *the word itself* to bear no such meaning: you must shew that men of the first name in learning not to have understood *Greek*: and when you have done this, you may then claim the credit of restoring your *old Interpreter* to his *old Honours*. In the mean while, should the reader allow my translation to be just, he must allow withal, what you seem to do too, that it *clinches the whole paragraph to the sense* I have given of it.

I shall now follow you through the exa-

¹ Præf. Hudf. Edit. Joseph.

mination of what you call *the most important part of my Defence*; in which you charge me with *attempting more openly to weaken the authority of Moses*¹: where after you have collected into one view, what you call my *scattered Sentiments*, you draw up the state of the controversy into *two points*². 1. *Whether Moses's account of the Creation and Fall of Man is to be understood literally or no.* 2. *Whether the Religion and Laws which Moses delivered to the Jews had a divine Origin and Authority.* To these two points I shall answer distinctly; and to shew how ready I am to humour you, as far as I am able, will give what you require, *a full and explicit account of my thoughts* upon them.

But in order to clear my way to them it will be necessary to consider what you have objected, as usual, to *two quotations* of mine that relate to the same subject.

In support of my exposition of *the paragraph*, we have been examining, and to shew, that *Josephus had put Moses on the same foot with Minos and the other old Lawgivers*; I took occasion to observe, that this was so far from *weakening Moses's authority* that it tended to *strengthen it* with those, to whom it was addressed; who had the highest esteem and opinion of *those very Lawgivers*, and were so far from being scandalized at the *fiction*s contrived by them for

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 46.

² Ibid. p. 48.

the good of the people ; that they bragged of them the more for that very reason, as the greatest benefactors of mankind. This I confirmed from *Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Plato*. But to these, you say¹, 'tis not worth while to answer ; they are Heathen authorities, and I am welcome to them : and as much Heathens as they are, they are welcome, I assure you, to me : I am proud of their acquaintance ; and though I do not intend to die in their faith, yet resolve to live in their friendship.

Of these *Plato* particularly, who has written on *Government* more fully than any of the Ancients, affirms it to be the chief duty of a Magistrate, to contrive such Fables, Fictions or Political Lies, as he thinks the most effectual to instil into the people a reverence for the Laws, and dispose them to a willing obedience to them. Now the Greek Fathers, I observed, were possessed likewise with a common opinion, that *Plato* had diligently studied the Books of *Moses*, and copied so many of his notions from them, that he was called by some the Attick *Moses* : and that *Clemens of Alexandria* and *Eusebius* do in a manner assert, or say at least much the same thing, that *Plato's* notion of the use of those Fables and Fictions was borrowed from the Mosaic Writings². But here you tell me flatly, that I have misrepresented *Clemens*, and acted still more unfairly with *Eusebius*³, whom since I have treated,

it

¹ Reply to Def. p. 61. ² Defence, p. 44. ³ Reply to Def. p. 62, 64.

it seems, *the worst of the two*, I will endeavour to do justice to in the first place.

And on a review of the passage taken from him, I find myself so far from having treated him *unfairly*, that I have ascribed nothing to him but what his very words plainly and directly express. In the *eleventh Book of his Preparation*, he sets out by undertaking to shew, *the exact agreement of the Greeks, and above all of Plato, with the Books of Moses, in all the most important points*. And the subject of the Book is to prove this by a comparison of the particulars. He opens the *twelfth Book* by telling us, that the purpose of it is to shew, *the particular agreement of Plato with the Jewish Oracles, just like the harmony of a well-tuned Lyre, in all the articles not specified in the former Book*. And in each Chapter of this Book, in which there are fifty he gives a different example of this same *harmony*; prefixing to each a *Summary of Title* of the contents it treats of. Among which we find these that follow.

That *Children ought to be trained up by Fables*.

That *a careful choice ought to be made of such Fables*.

That *we ought not to expose to all promiscuously the profound and awful doctrine of Truth*.

That *Plato allegorizes the story of Paradise, just as Moses*.

That

That Youth should be trained to the exercise of Virtue by Hymns and Songs.

That 'tis necessary sometimes to use a Lye instead of Physick, for the good of those who want it.

The passage I have quoted is found under this last title; and the Chapter itself begins with the words of Plato, to this effect, as nearly as I can render them: That a Law-giver, who is good for any thing, ought above all other Fictions contrived for the good of the Youth, to invent such especially, as tend to make them do what is right and just, not by force, but readily and willingly. To which is immediately subjoined the reflection of Eusebius himself, that there are very many instances of this kind, in the books of the Hebrews.

I appeal now to every reader, whether it is possible for a testimony to be more explicit and direct than this. 'Tis produced to prove, that according to Eusebius, Plato's notion of Political Fictions was borrowed from Moses. Eusebius expressly affirms it. How is it then that I have acted unfairly with him? Because I conceal, it seems, and drop the following words, which shew, that the Fiction he imputes to Scripture, consisted only in ascribing human passions to the Deity, and representing him, as jealous, sleepy, angry; which, however it may amuse some readers, yet nothing at all to the purpose. The fact,

fact, for which *Eusebius* is appealed to, is, whether *Plato* borrowed the notion from *Scripture*, or no : *Eusebius* declares that he did ; which is all that I am concerned for. If we would know the particular instances of *Fiction* that *Plato* borrowed ; we must learn that from *Plato* himself, and not from *Eusebius*. I have shewn what kind it was that *Plato* recommended ; and no body, I dare say, can shew that he ever recommended what *Eusebius* here mentions ; or for the good of the people ever feigned God to be *jealous, angry, sleepy, &c.* My business then being to prove the authority of *Eusebius*, that *Plato* had borrowed his notion from *Moses* ; it could not be to the purpose to exemplify it, by instances, which he did not borrow. And *Eusebius* might possibly give this turn to his argument, to obviate the offence, which a frank allowance of such a fact might give to the more rigid and zealous : it being well known, that no small clamour was raised against him by the strictly orthodox of those times, for his opinions in some high Points of Religion.

Let's now see what you object to the other passage of *Clemens* ; who in speaking, as I say of the *Art of governing*, allows the Greeks to have learnt from *Moses* among other lessons of *Policy, the proper use and application of Lying or Fiction*¹. But you charge me here with misrepresentation, in calling that the *Art of*

¹ Defence, p. 44.

governing

governing, which ought to be rendered the *Art of governing in war*, or the *Art of a General*. And should I grant you this, pray what would you gain by it? Does it not come up to what I contend for; or at least, as I have put it, *to much the same thing*? For what difference is there in the thing itself, when used for the *good of the people*, whether it be used *in peace*, or *in war*? Unless that *in war*, 'tis seldom practised with effect, but *to the destruction of thousands*; *in peace* without the *least hurt or injury* to any one: and this difference, I'm afraid, will give no advantage to your side of the question.

Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirit :

is, I know, the ordinary maxim of *military policy*; and you give us from *Virgil*, the *mentita tela* of an enemy: but you forget what you had observed on a less pertinent occasion, that these are *Heathenish maxims*; the suggestions of a *loose morality*: Will you undertake to defend them by the *strict principles of Religion*, or assert the practice of them to be honourable in the *character of Moses*? If you can do this, then the *use of Fiction* in any case for the *good of the people* may surely be defended by the same principles. For to consider *Moses's character*: was he not *divinely inspired and assisted* in the same extraordinary manner in all the *Events of war*, as in all the *Arts of peace*?

G

by

by *stretching out his rod* he could drown a mighty host; by *lifting up his hands* destroy a whole army: is it not then the same diminution of his *divine Authority*, to suppose him under a necessity of recurring to *Fiction* or *Stratagem* in the one case, as in the other? Considering, I say, the circumstances of *Moses's character*, it seems difficult to make out the difference: yet you roundly assert, and think the assertion innocent, that he might use *all the arts of deceiving in war*; but will not suffer me to impute to him the *least possible degree of it in peace*, without *weakening his Authority*.

But as this passage of *my Defence* has generally been thought the most exceptionable of any in *my Two Pieces*; so I must be leave to recite here my very words, in order to explain my true meaning in them the more clearly; they run thus: *Is the notion then of the Divine Origin of the Law, and the Inspiration of Moses to be resolved into Fiction and Fable, or political Lying? No, far be it from me to think or say that: but this perhaps one may venture to say; that the supposition of some degree of such Fiction may possibly be found necessary to the solving the difficulties of the Mosaic Writings, without any hurt to their authority or advantage to Infidelity, &c.* And here we see after all the cry that has been made against me, I expressly disclaim the least

¹ Defence, p. 45.

thought

thought of saying or doing any thing, that really contradicts the *Divine Origin of the Law or Inspiration of Moses*: and in the next words, where I seem to allow *some degree of Fiction*, I have used all the terms of *reserve, doubt and diffidence*, that can possibly be crowded into any sentence: *perhaps; may venture; some degree; may possibly be found*: which can by no means imply a persuasion, but an hint only to ground a question upon. And that still, upon a supposition, that such a question can do *no manner of hurt to the authority of Moses, or service to Infidelity*. When the reader has duly reflected on this, then let him consider, how justly I have been accused from the evidence of this passage, of calling in question *the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures*.

To return to the testimony of *Clemens*: where tho' it seems needless to say any thing more of a *translation*, which bears equally in either sense to the point in question; yet as I never translated any passage with design to make it bear more than it would strictly carry; so I think myself obliged to give some account here, why I translated the word *σπαήνημα*, by the *Art of governing in general*, and not, as you would have it, the *Art of governing in war*: and for this I had the following reasons.

That tho' I well knew the word, *σπαήνειν*, signify properly, *to lead an army or govern*

it in war, in the old *Classick Authors*, yet I knew withal, that in the time of *Josephus*, and of the *Ecclesiastical Writers* especially, who lived after him, the word had lost its proper, original sense, and was applicable to denote *Civil Magistracy* or *Government* in general. Thus *Moses* is commonly called by *Josephus* the *ᾠρχὴς* of the *Jews*, not in the notion of a *General* or *Leader of an army*, but of *supreme Governor* or *Magistrate*. And this, as in many other places, so in that particularly, where he appears in the mere form of a *Civil Magistrate*, and in the very act of *bearing and judging civil causes*¹. His successor *Joshua* is in like manner always stiled the *ᾠρχὴς*, in the sense of general *Governor*². And what's most to the point *Joseph*, in his government of *Ægypt*, where he had no *military command*, is called in the same sense, *ᾠρχὴς*: where a learned *Critic* in a marginal note observes, that the word had in that Age lost its relation to War and denoted *Civil Power* or *Government* in general³. In which sense the *Ecclesiastical Writers* generally use it, as *Valesius* has fully shewn⁴; and as every body will find from the old *Lexicons* and *Glossaries*⁵.

¹ Antiq. l. 3. 4. Item, l. 4. 4. §. 7, &c. ² Ib. l. 5. §. 1, 3, 29. ³ Ibid. l. 2. 6. ⁴ Valef. Not. ad lib. 3. Ammiani Mareell. c. vi. it. Not. ad Euseb. Hist. Ecclesiast. l. 7. c. xi. not. 6. it. ad Euseb. l. 8. c. xi. not. 4. ⁵ D. Fresne. it. Lexic. Vet. ad finem Operum S. Cyrilli. H. Steph. Thes.

This being then the common acceptation of the word in the Age of *Clemens*, an admirer of *Josephus*; and *ἐπαλήθευς* carrying the notion of a *general Governor* or *Magistrate*; 'tis certain that *ἐπαλήθευμα*, considered singly, may truly and properly be rendered by the *Art of governing*, without any respect to war. And as the context in this place seemed somewhat perplexed and obscure; so I was not curious to consider, whether it ought to be rendered the *Art of Government, Civil or Military*, since it was obvious to reflect, as I have observed above, that in either sense it comes to *much the same thing*.

As to the fact itself, whether *Plato* did really borrow any thing from *Moses* or not, I am no way concerned for the truth of it; but shall leave it to *these Fathers* to answer for it: what they have delivered concerning it, might be with a view to recommend their Religion to the *Greeks*, agreeably to what *Clemens* himself declares, that *as the Apostle became a Hebrew to the Hebrews, so it was reasonable to become a Greek to Greeks*. And the very passage we have been examining may, for any thing I know, be one of those *unsound ones*, which *Photius* tells us are to be found in this very work of *Clemens*¹.

I shall now at last explain myself more particularly on the two most important points of this Controversy;

¹ Photii Biblioth. p. 288.

1. *The Allegorical Exposition of the History of the Creation and Fall of Man.*
2. *The Divine Origin and Inspiration of the Scriptures.*

As to the first of these, you charge me with asserting, that *the literal sense is in fact contradictory to reason and the notions we have of God*¹. But here, Sir, you either mistake my meaning thro' want of attention, or thro' design misrepresent it. I had said in my *Letter*, that *all Commentators are forced in some measure to desert the literal meaning*²: and in my *Defence*, where I have further explained myself, that *if it be found in fact contradictory to reason and the notions we have of God, we must necessarily desert it*³. The first I shall still assert to be true; and the latter all Divines whatsoever will allow to be so. But to reject the *literal sense conditionally*, and on supposition only of *its being contrary to reason*, which is all that I have done, or designed at least to do, is a quite different thing, from what you charge me with; *the asserting it to be in fact contradictory to reason*. So that the very foundation you build upon, of my having *absolutely rejected the letter*, is false, since I reject it only *hypothetically or conditionally*. Besides; by *deserting the Letter*, there's no necessity to understand an *absolute denial or rejection of all historical sense* in it; but a preference only of the *Allegorical* in

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 48. ² Letter, p. 13. ³ Def. p. 15.

some

some particular cases, as the properest basis for a *rational Defence of Religion*.

Now in this very *History of the Creation*, I find the *Commentators* greatly divided and disagreeing among themselves, in their several methods of explaining it. Some prefer the *Allegorical Sense*, others the *Literal*; most indeed allow, that *both* are consistent, and may be used together: but all take a liberty of applying each arbitrarily, without any certain rule, just as their several systems or fancies incline them¹. So that 'tis not possible to draw from them all, any uniform and certain principle of true belief and interpretation. 'Tis this I refer to, this I complain of in the *Defence of my Letter*²: that those who defend Religion so *dogmatically*, do not state and define what it is, *that we Christians are obliged to believe* of this story: that they do not determine *the bounds of Letter and Allegory*; do not fix some *settled rule* of applying them; but *jump*, as I say, *arbitrarily from one to the other*, as each man's whim directs him. And in this uncertainty and latitude of interpretation, 'tis ridiculous to charge particular opinions with *Infidelity*, that offend against no established maxim or rule of exposition.

After trifling a while about the word, *Mystery*, in a manner that deserves no answer,

¹ Les écrits des Peres & de la plupart des Interpretes en sont pleins; & ces sortes d'explications sont souvent arbitraires. *Calmet. Comment. Pref. Gen. p. 11.* ² *Defence, p. 13.*

you

you collect the substance of your charge into one point, *viz.* that I alledge *in favour of Allegory, that the Primitive Fathers esteemed it on many occasions the only method of vindicating Scripture* ¹. This you treat as a bold and rash Assertion, and exert all your Strength and Learning to prove it so; declaring, that I have mistaken the sense of every one of the testimonies produced to confirm it. Here then we will once more join issue, and examine the truth of your allegation and mine: where the Reader, I dare say, will not be so much surprized at *my boldness* in affirming, as at yours, in so *rashly denying* a fact, which is evident and known to all, who are conversant in *Ecclesiastical Antiquity*.

As for Origen; in the remains still left us of his Works, we have proof enough of his attachment to the *allegorical Exposition* and contempt of the *literal*. St. Jerom, speaking of him declares, *that he turned the story of Paradise so wholly to Allegory, as to destroy or take away all the literal truth of it: by the Trees, understanding Angels; by the Rivers Cælestial Virtues; &c* ². And the same Father, giving an account of another Greek Expositor, he had been reading, *on the story of Melchisedec, says just the same of him too, that he allegorized the whole in such a manner, as to destroy the historical truth of it* ³.

¹ Reply to Defencé, p. 51. ² Hieron. Op. T. 4. par. p. 310. Edit. Benedict. ³ Ib. Tom. 2. par. 1. p. 574.

St. *Austin* tells us ; that there were some, who interpreted the whole account of *Paradise* of things to be understood spiritually or allegorically, as if the things themselves had not been really visible, or corporal, but delivered for the sake of those spiritual significations ¹. And though he declares on this occasion for holding fast the *Letter*, along with the *Allegory*; yet it is certain that he had once been of a different mind, and thought, that we could not explain the *History of Man's Fall* piously and worthily of God but in the allegorical way ²; and seems to have always held the same constant opinion, as to the six days of the Creation, and to have looked upon them as wholly allegorical ³.

Thus, Sir, in direct contradiction to what you maintain, there were several Writers in the primitive Ages, who thought the best way of vindicating Scripture in some instances to be by the help of *Allegory*, even to the desertion of the *Letter*: and this without any imputation on their zeal or sincerity in their Religion; or the least suspicion of *Infidelity*. 'Twas the same case with the Jewish Apologists, particularly *Philo*, from whom I had drawn some testimonies to the very point: but you tell me peremptorily, that I have mistaken the sense of every one of them ⁴. And to give us a general view in what sense *Philo* is to be understood,

¹ De Civ. Dei. l. 13. c. xxi.

² De Genes. contr. Manich.

³ De Civ. Dei. l. 11. c. xxx. ⁴ Rep. to Def. p. 51.

H

you

you observe, that he more than once cautions his readers against departing from the letter of the Old Testament, and says, that all the Ceremonies relating to the Worship of the Temple and a thousand other Precepts would be neglected, if we were to confine ourselves only to the allegorical Interpretation. But what is this to the purpose? Or how does it confute what I have advanced? Is there the least hint in *my Letter*, or the *Defence of it*, that *Philo* or the *Primitive Writers* maintained the whole sense of Scripture to be allegorical? Might not *Philo* believe the general sense to be literal, and yet hold some particular passages to be wholly allegorical? This surely is consistent, and that it was the very case, we shall presently see. For instance; *the Law*, says *Philo*, accounts the Camel an unclean beast, because, though he chews the cud, he does not divide the hoof; now if we consider this according to the outward Letter, 'tis hard to say, what sense there is in it; but if according to the inward meaning; there is a most clear and necessary one, &c. which he proceeds to explain. This passage I had produced before¹; but as you have said nothing to it in your Reply, I must confront you with it once again, the better to confine you to the true state of the question. Let me ask you then, whether *Philo*, in this instance, does not actually vindicate Scripture by its allegorical meaning, in opposition to the literal one? If he

¹ Defence, p. 17.

does

¹ Reply
Sixt. Se

does; then all you have been saying about him has neither *truth nor sense* in it: if he does not; then I am content to take whatever shame you please to throw upon me; even *the share* you so candidly give me of *Mr. Woolston's shame*¹.

You say that Philo *turns almost every thing to Allegory*; and yet by your use of him, one would imagine, that he had *turned nothing to Allegory*. But to drop for the present what you or I think, let's see what other Men of Learning, not heated in this Controversy, have thought of him with regard to this very question. Philo, says Photius, wrote *Expositions on the Old Testament, turning almost every where the Letter to Allegory: and from him all that Custom of allegorical Interpretation flowed into the Church*².

Sixtus Senensis tells us of him, that he *affirms it to be a piece of rustick simplicity to believe literally, that the World was created in six days or in any certain time. And that several Catholick Authors had followed his opinion, as Austin among the Latins, and Procopius among the Greeks*³: That he so treats what Moses has said of Paradise, as to destroy the literal Sense of it; making the Garden, the Plants, and the other things described in it to contain nothing but Allegory. In which error he was followed, he says, by Origen, and

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 51.

² Phot. Biblioth. p. 277.

³ Sixt. Senens. Biblioth. l. 5. p. 338.

very many Writers besides, as he shews afterwards¹: and he declares, that St. Ambrose likewise in imitation of Philo seems to have understood the story of Paradise wholly according to Allegory, rejecting the historical Sense of it². And if we would know this Author's own opinion of allegorical Interpretation; he affirms it to be by far the most useful for the establishment of our Faith, and the institution of our Manners: and says further, that should the enemies of the Law and the Prophets object to us and demand, for what reason God gave such absurd Laws; to cut off the Foreskin, kill the Lamb, the Goat, &c. we should have no way of defending ourselves but by the allegorical Sense; without which all those things must needs appear insipid, rustick, and wholly unworthy the Divine Majesty³. And now, have I advanced any thing like this in favour of Allegory? Yet the Author who has advanced it, was a Man highly esteemed and celebrated in his own time, not only for his Learning, which was great, but for his Piety and sincere Zeal for Religion, which were allowed to be as great.

To this Writer, who was a *Papist*, I shall just add a *Protestant*, Rivetus; who in these Points was as highly orthodox, and as great an Advocate of the Letter as yourself. Who declares, that St. Austin held the six days of

¹ Sixt. Senens. Biblioth. p. 340.

³ Ibid. l. 3 p. 141.

² Ibid. p. 341.

¹ Rivet
Oper. T.

the Creation to have an allegorical Meaning only, and that Philo, Procopius, Cajetanus are of the same opinion ¹. Of the last of whom he intimates, that he held *the literal story of Eve formed from the rib of Adam to be a silly one* ².

By this time the Reader will be able to judge how *rash or bold*, as you say, my Assertion is, *that the Primitive Fathers and Jewish Apologists esteemed the allegorical Exposition to be on some occasions the best Method of vindicating Scripture*. But because you push me so vigorously on this question, I must beg leave to dwell a little longer on it.

Josephus reflecting on the calumnies charged on the Jews, and the ridicule they underwent on the account of *the Tabernacle and priestly Vestments* ³, says, that *whoever seriously considers the fabrick and construction of them, will find the Lawgiver to have been a Divine Man, and that they are falsely reproached on this score*. For if we duly examine the Particulars with judgment and without envy, we shall discover them all to have been formed in imitation, or as a typical representation of the Universe and its several Parts: and he proceeds to explain this analogy or similitude through all its Particulars. *The Tabernacle thirty cubits long, divided into three Parts, denotes, he says, the earth, the sea, the heavens: the twelve loaves, the twelve months:*

¹ Rivet. Exercitat. in Genes. c. 1. p. 9. Op. T. 1. ² Ibid. Oper. T. 2. p. 936. ³ Antiq. l. 3. c. 7.

the seven branches of the candlestick, the seven planets, &c. Now what is all this but recurring to Allegory, in order to vindicate Scripture from the cavils and ridicule of Scepticks?

I had produced likewise in my *Defence* a testimony from *Barnabas*; where *this Apostolical Writer* declares, that *Moses in prohibiting Swine's flesh, meant only to prohibit the keeping company with such, as in their manners are like to Swine*¹. And what do you say to this passage in your *Reply*? Why, you allow it to be a *strong one* to the purpose; yet have the assurance to say, that I have *mistaken every Passage produced to that purpose*².

I have alledged also *two other Quotations*, on the authority of *Cotelerius*, from *Tertulian* and *Origen*. Where the first says, that *nothing is so contemptible as the Mosaic Laws about the distinction and prohibition of animal food*. And the latter more freely; *that if we take them literally they are unworthy of God, and less rational than the Laws of Men; nay, that some of them are contrary to reason, and impossible to be observed*³. And here you take notice, that I have stopped short, not like a lover of truth, without acquainting the reader with an observation, that follows, of *Cotelerius* himself: that on the contrary very many passages might be collected out of the same Authors which speak in praise of the same Laws⁴. But

¹ *Defence*, p. 17.

² *Reply to Defence*, p. 51, 55.

³ *Def.* p. 17, 18.

⁴ *Reply to Def.* p. 55.

has *Cotelerius* produced any of those passages? If he had, it would have been pertinent to consider, how far they had balanced, or superseded the other. But since he has not done this, and what he has said is not, as you have given it, but what should be rendered, that *many passages might be collected from the same Fathers, expressed more commodiously in praise of the same Laws*: so, till we see the Passages themselves, and understand the force of what you had left out, *more commodiously*; the different passages may, for any thing we know to the contrary, be very well reconciled.

But you affirm, that *Cotelerius himself has wholly mistaken the sense of Tertullian*; and for the passage of Origen, it effectually carries its own disproof with it¹. We shall presently see what judgment you shew in this affirmation. It is plain, you say, that Tertullian is speaking ironically of what Marcion and the Hereticks, and not what himself thought of those Laws. But it will be as plain, I doubt, that though he is speaking of the *Railleries of the Hereticks*, yet he allows the ground of that Raillery to be true, and owns the fact, that the Laws are really foolish and contemptible in themselves, according to the dictates of human Wisdom, and that God made use of them for the very reason of their being contemptible, in order to baffle the knowledge and learning of the wise.

¹ Reply to Defence, p. 56, 57.

In the other passage, you bring from him, he is only suggesting some reasons which the *Divine Providence* might have for the Institution of such Laws: to give a lesson of abstinence, and a check to that gluttony, which, (as he adds in words that you have wholly omitted) when it was eating the food of Angels, yet longed for the Melons and Cucumbers of *Ægypt*. An omission, I don't take notice of, for the sake of clamouring, as you do, about falsifying and misrepresenting; but to shew how dextrously you can skip over a sore place; and evade the touching on any thing, that intimates an inclination in the Jews to the things of *Ægypt*. And were I to insist on the passage for any purpose of this Controversy, you would demonstrate, I dare say against *Tertullian*, just as you did against *St Stephen*, that there was not so much as a Cucumber in *Ægypt* in *Moses's* time.

As to the testimony of *Origen*, it carries, you say, its own confutation with it. But, pray Sir, recollect here, what you are so apt on all occasions to forget, the real state of the question, which does not turn on the truth or falshood of what *Origen* has said, but on the fact, whether he has said it or no. If he has said it, then my affirmation is true; that the *Primitive Writers* esteemed the allegorical way on some occasions to be the only method of vindicating *Scripture*; and the negative you maintain false. But I am at a loss to understand, how this notion of *Origen* confutes itself. Why, he asserts

asserts, you say, *that to be impossible, which in fact he knew to have been always observed.* But this shews only the negligence of your own attention : for how could he be so gross, as to charge an *impossibility*, on what he *really knew to be true*? Every one, I dare say, will see at once, that he meant something very different from what you imagine, viz. *that some of those Laws, which the Jews constantly observed, were yet from the nature of things impossible to be observed, in that full rigour and strictness, which the literal command imports, and of which no exception or abatement was signified.* For instance; the Law, that prohibits *the eating of blood*, is *absolute*; and the thing itself forbidden in *any manner or degree*; and *whoever eats it in any manner was to be cut off*¹. Now is it possible to eat *any flesh meat*, without eating *blood in some manner or some degree*? This might perhaps be one of the *Laws*, that Origen had regard to: where it may be answered, that God requires only an *obedience adequate to our power*; and when we have discharged that, we have *satisfied the Law* however *absolute*, or *rigorous*: yet what you answer is nothing to the purpose, and the effect only of your own mistake.

But since you seem to have so slight an opinion of Origen, as to think him absurd enough even to *confute himself*; I will just give you a short character of him, from a greater man

¹ Levit. iii. 17. vii. 26, 27.

than yourself; one of the greatest that ever lived, *Erasmus*; who declares, *that in the Exposition of the Scriptures, allowing for some particular points of Faith, he would prefer one Origen to ten Orthodox*¹.

And now, to give my own opinion of this question; I take the use of *Allegory in the History of the Creation and Fall of Man*, to be in some degree necessary, to establish the truth of the *Christian Religion*; since all Expositors who have considered with most attention the general Scheme of Christianity, however differing in other Points, have commonly agreed in this. *Calmet* declares, *that it is extremely difficult to expound the first Chapters of Genesis literally; especially as to what regards the Fall of Man, and the Story of the Serpent: and that the Jews do not suffer their young Men under the age of twenty-five or thirty Years to read them*. And *Dr. W.* himself, in vindicating one passage of this very History, about *God's walking in the Garden*, says, *that a Man must be next to an Idiot, who understands it literally*. As to the Letter, one thing at least is certain, and we may assuredly draw *this historical truth from it*; that *God in the beginning created the World and all Things in it; and placed Man in a state of bliss and happiness from which he fell by his own sin and folly*. But whether this was brought about

¹ At ego in Scripturarum enarratione, unum Origenem decem Orthodoxis anteposuerim, exceptis aliquot dogmatibus fidei, in Gal. ii. 11. Crit. Sacr.

exactly and literally, according to every circumstance of *the Mosaic account* ; with all the *Form and Machinery*, of *six Days labour* ; a *Paradise*, &c. as it is not, in my judgment, material to inquire, so I shall not take upon me to determine. All that I need say further on it is ; first, that I never meant *to reject the Letter of Scripture absolutely* in any case, but where 'tis found *inconsistent with Reason and the Attributes of God* : and there *all Divines* whatsoever must agree with me *in rejecting it*. Secondly, that had I *absolutely rejected it* in some cases ; I had yet done no more than what *several Apologists of Christianity* in all Ages had done before me, whose *piety and zeal for Religion* were never called in question on that account.

I shall now in the last place give a distinct account of my Sentiments, concerning the *Divine Origin and Inspiration of the Scriptures*. And as in *my Letter to Dr. W.* I had declared myself *a sincere Christian*, and repeated the same declaration in *my Defence* of it ; so I had reason to expect, that however free and offensive any of my expressions might appear to some, whom a narrow circle of life and studies had rendered stiff in particular habits and opinions, yet in vertue of such a declaration *my belief of an Article so fundamental*, would have been presumed and taken for granted, and that I should have been safe at least from the *groundless and spiteful charge of Infidelity* ; since in the character of *a Christian* I take to be necessa-

rily included a *general belief of the Divine Origin and Inspiration of the Books of the Old and New Testament*: a Doctrine too clearly delivered *in the Scriptures*, to be doubted of and called in question by any one, who lays claim to that title. And as to the particular character and case of *Moses*; I take him to have been a *great Prophet and Lawgiver*, who in an *extraordinary and miraculous* manner was *favoured, assisted, and inspired by God in the institution of his Laws and Religion*, and consequently had a *Divine Authority*, which is frequently appealed to and confirmed *in the New Testament*.

But as 'tis necessary to believe *of the Scriptures in general*, that they are *divinely inspired*, so 'tis as necessary, from the evidence of plain facts and declarations in *those very Scriptures*, to allow some exception to the *general rule*, nor to insist, as some do, that *every word, sentence, narration, history; or indeed every Book* we call *canonical*, was *dictated by God*.

This is the only notion expressly affirmed by me, that can be thought to *weaken* in any manner *the Divine Authority of the Christian Religion*: and 'tis indeed the only one I ever intended to affirm on the subject: and if any thing be said or pushed further by me in either of my Pieces, than what the consequences of this position will fairly justify, I retract and disclaim it.

Here then I fix my foot; and take upon me to assert, that we are under no obligation of
Reason

Re
are
tha
Di
mo
suat
like
of t
sary
N
that
verf
you
you
join
migl
look
ever,
great
rage
some
prop
fore I
front
name,
which
have
Th
Arch
Sermo
I sh
ing th

Reason or Religion to believe, that *the Scriptures* are of *absolute and universal Inspiration*; or that every passage in them was dictated by a *Divine Spirit*: and this I do from no other motive or view in the world, but a firm persuasion of the truth of it; and a persuasion likewise, that the allowance and declaration of that truth is not only useful, but necessary to a *rational Defence of Religion*.

Now as this, I say, is the only opinion, that I have directly asserted in this Controversy, without the least notice taken of it by you in *either of your Replies*; so did I not see you disposed rather to *cavil at trifles*, than to *join issue* on any question of importance, I might reasonably take it for a proof, that you look upon it as *orthodox and inoffensive*. However, since passion and prejudice have so great a power in the world; and the seeds of rage may be already at work in the breasts of some readers on the bare mention of such a proposition; I cannot but think it prudent, before I enter on any explication of it, to place in front before me *an authority or two of great name*, in order to break the force of the storm, which, by what I have already experienced, I have too much reason to be apprehensive of.

The first authority I shall produce is of Archbishop Tillotson; whose words, in a *Sermon* on this very Subject, are as follow.

I shall only say this in general; that considering the end of this Inspiration, which was to
inform

inform the world certainly of the mind and will of God, it is necessary for every Man to believe, that the inspired Penmen of Scripture were so far assisted as was necessary to this end: and he that thinks upon good grounds, that this end cannot be secured, unless every word and syllable were immediately dictated, he hath reason to believe it was so: but if any Man upon good grounds thinks the end of writing the Scripture may be sufficiently secured without that, he hath no reason to conclude, that God, who is not wanting in what is necessary, is guilty of doing what is superfluous. And if any Man is of opinion, that Moses might write the History of those actions, which he himself did or was present at, without an immediate Revelation of them; or that Solomon, by his natural and acquired Wisdom, might speak those wise sayings, which are in his Proverbs; or the Evangelists might write what they heard and saw, or what they had good assurance of from others; as St. Luke tells he did: or that St. Paul might write for his Cloak and Parchments at Troas, and salute by name his friends and brethren; or that he might advise Timothy to drink a little wine, &c. without the immediate dictate of the Spirit of God, he seems to have reason on his side. For that Men may without an immediate Revelation write those things, which they think without a Revelation seems very plain. And that they did so, there is this probable argument for it, because we find the Evangelists in relating the discourses of Christ,

are

are very far from agreeing in the particular expressions and words, though they do agree in the substance of the Discourses: but if the words had been dictated by the Spirit of God, they must have agreed in them. For when St. Luke differs from St. Matthew, in relating what our Saviour said, it is impossible, that they should both relate it right, as to the very words and forms of expression; but they both relate the substance of what he said, &c. *

Now if we reflect on the difference of stile in a Sermon, from that of a debate in a Controversy of Learning; and consider the reserve proper to the one, and the freedom necessary to the other; we shall find that I have affirmed nothing more in effect, than what this great Man had delivered from the Pulpit. He tells us, we see, that those who do not believe Moses to have been universally inspired in writing his Books, seem to have Reason on their side; and suggests some probable arguments to prove, that the Evangelists in composing theirs had no Revelation at all.

To the authority of the Archbishop, I shall add that of Grotius; whose words are: *I have truly said, that all the Books in the Hebrew Canon were not dictated by the Holy Ghost: that they were written with a pious affection of mind, I do not deny: and this is what the Great Synagogue determined, to whose judgment the Hebrews in this matter stand.*

* Tillotson's Works, Vol. III. p. 449.

But

But there was no occasion for histories to be dictated by the Holy Spirit: 'twas enough for the Writer to have a good memory as to the things related, or diligence in copying the old Records. Besides, the word, Holy Ghost, is ambiguous; for it either signifies, as I have taken it, a Divine Inspiration, such as the ordinary Prophets had, as also David and Daniel sometimes; or it signifies a pious motion or impulse to deliver some salutary precepts of life, or things political and civil; in which sense Maimonides takes it, where he treats of Writings either historical or moral. If Luke had written his Books by the dictates of Divine Inspiration, he would have chosen rather to establish his Authority on that, than on the faith of the witnesses he followed. So in writing the Acts, which he had seen done by Paul, he had no need of any Inspiration. Why then do we receive Luke's Books as Canonical? because the Primitive Church judged them to be piously and faithfully written, and concerning things of the greatest moment to Salvation¹.

Under the shelter of these great names, of the most rational Preacher, and the most rational Expositor of Scripture, that any Christian Age has produced, I may venture to open my own opinion the more freely; so far at least, as to shew the grounds on which 'tis built, which is all I think necessary at pre-

¹ Grot. Votum pro pace. Artic. de Canonis Scripturis, Of. T 4. p. 672.

sent, reserving the fuller discussion of it to an opportunity of more leisure.

Now in searching *the Scriptures*, to discover the real state of this question, I found it to no purpose to lay much stress on those texts, that are usually alledged on the occasion; since by admitting a latitude and variety of interpretation they furnish nothing decisive, but leave room still for fresh and endless squabbles: my business was to consider chiefly the *matters of fact* delivered there; the surest foundation to build any persuasion upon; and to attend to the plain sense and language of *those facts*, when stript of the glosses and forced interpretations which *Commentators* would fasten on them in favour of *their systems* and *prejudices*.

For instance, as soon as *the Children of Israel* had made their retreat from *Ægypt*, and got any time to repose themselves in the wilderness; we find *Moses* employing himself from morning to night in judging the people, by bearing and deciding all causes of dispute among them: this *Jethro* his Father-in-law observing, and reflecting on the fatigue and trouble it occasioned both to *Moses* and the people, took the liberty to represent to him the inconveniencies of this method, and to convince him, that it was quite wrong, and what must of course tire out both himself and the multitude. He advised him therefore for his own ease, as well as the publick good,

to chuse out a number of able and honest men, to be set over the people as *their Judges or Rulers* in all ordinary cases; in a proper subordination to each other according to their several abilities; *Rulers over thousands, over hundreds, over fifties, over tens*; reserving to himself the cognizance only of *greater causes*: That he might not be drawn off from the more important part of his duty, *his attendance upon God, and the care of his Religion*. Upon which, *Moses*, as we read, *hearkened to the voice of his Father-in-law, and did all that he had said*¹. And from what is related afterwards of the same fact, we learn, that *Moses* had the *solemn consent and approbation of the people*, before he put it in execution². *Josephus*, in his account of this story, takes occasion very justly to praise the *modesty and ingenuity of Moses*, in not assuming to himself the credit of an invention so useful, but *frankly ascribing all the glory of it to its true Author*³.

Now the inference I draw from this, is that it appears very clearly from this plain fact, that *Moses* in the case of an *Institution* of great importance to the *whole body of the people*, and to the *good order and government of the Community*, had not the assistance of *any divine Inspiration*, but derived the whole thought and design of it, from the advice and counsel of a wise and prudent man,

¹ Exod. xviii. 24. ² Deut. i. 13. ³ Antiq. l. 3. c. 4.

whom

whom all that we know is, that he was *Priest of Midian*. If then there was *no Inspiration* in the thing itself, there could be no occasion for any in the narration of it; and consequently *Moses was not constantly and uniformly inspired by God*, either in what he instituted, or what he has related.

As to what Bishop Tillotson has suggested in the other case of the Evangelists; and Grotius more particularly in *that of St. Luke*; 'tis certain, that there is in the *several Gospels* such a *disagreement and variation in the accounts of the same facts*, as cannot by any wit of man be cleared from the charge of *Inconsistency*. As in the *Genealogy of Christ*¹; in the account of the *woman who poured a box of ointment*²; of *two men possessed with Devils*³; of *two blind by the way side*⁴; of the *Thieves on the Cross*⁵; of the *time and hour of our Saviour's crucifixion*⁶; of the *circumstances of what passed at his Sepulchre*⁷, &c.

The Commentators, I know, have with fruitless pains strained hard to *reconcile these differences*; and work them all up into *one uniform and consistent narration*: but it had been, in my opinion, of more *service to Religion*, had they been content rather to acknowledge fairly, what cannot be denied honestly, than

¹ Mat. i. 1. Luke iii. 24. ² Matth. xxvi. 6. Mar. xiv. 3. Luke vii. 38. John xii. 1. ³ Matth. viii. 28. Luke viii. 26. ⁴ Matth. xx. 30. Mar. x. 46. Luke xviii. 35. ⁵ Matth. xxvii. 44. Mar. xv. 32. Luke xxiii. 39. ⁶ Mar. xv. 25. John xix. 14. ⁷ Matth. xxviii. 2. Luke xxiv. 4. John xx. 11.

labour as they do to support *notions* in opposition to *things* ; *systems* in contradictions to *facts*. For all these variations, as they affect only *the circumstances*, and not *the reality of the facts themselves* ; so they are so far from *hurting the cause of Christianity*, or casting *any blemish on the veracity of the Evangelists*, that they the more effectually confirm it. *This very thing*, says Theophylact, gives the stronger proof of their integrity, that they have not agreed in all points : for otherwise they might be suspected to have written by compact¹.

Mark is observed by all *Expositors* to tread so closely on the steps of Matthew, and to agree so minutely with him in the circumstances and even words of many of his narrations ; that some believe him to have had *the use of Matthew's Gospel* towards the forming his own : and what does *Religion* gain by the bargain ? What fruit does it reap from this *great harmony* ? Why, to find Mark's *authority diminishing* in proportion to his *exact agreement with Matthew*, and the character of an *Evangelist* dwindling into that of a *Transcriber* ; which the Criticks generally impute to him².

¹ Δι' αὐτὸ γὰρ τοῦτο μᾶλλον ἀληθεύουσιν ὅτι μὴ κατὰ πάντα ὁμοφώνησαν, &c. Theophyl. Proœm. in Matt.

² Marcus pedissequus & breviator ejus videtur, August. de Conf. Evan. l. 1. p. 3.

Marci Evangelium ejus, quod a Matthæo proditum est, videri potest Epitome. Erasm. in Luc. i. 1.

Marcus autem Græcè compendium magis historiæ, quam historiam scripserat. Grot. Ibid.

Usum esse Marcum Matthæi Evangelio. apertum facit collatio. Grot. in Mar. i.

The case would be still worse, were the same minute agreement observed in the other Gospels; and the strong foundation of a *Quadruple Testimony* would by that means be reduced to the questionable credit of a *single Evidence*; so that as Dr. Hammond has judiciously remarked; *these variations in the Evangelists were necessary to make their testimonies several, and so to give them the greater authority by the number of them*¹.

But tho' these little *inconsistencies* in the Gospels cannot be of any disservice, but of real use to Religion; yet they effectually confute the common *notion* and *hypothesis*, that the *Evangelists* in composing them were under the *perpetual influence of a Divine, unerring Spirit*. For as Bishop Tillotson reasons above, if they had been *absolutely inspired*, they must necessarily have *agreed as absolutely* in their several Stories: but *since they are very far from agreeing in their accounts of what our Saviour said*, 'tis impossible that they should all be inspired, as 'tis impossible that they should all be in the right. This conclusion is clear and evident to every Man's sense and reason; as certain, as the facts, 'tis grounded on, are certain: allow but the facts, and you of course establish this consequence. And in truth, whatever any *Divines* think fit to impute to the *Evangelists*, the *Evangelists themselves* are so far from pretending to this pri-

¹ Hammond's *Præf. to Annotat. on Tit. Gospel*, p. 4.

vilege,

vilege, of *universal Inspiration* or *absolute Infallibility*, that they in effect disclaim it; and put their whole credit on a foundation meerly human, and common to all other Writers; viz. *their capacity or ability to know the truth of what they deliver, and their integrity in delivering it to the best of their knowledge* ¹.

St. Paul, we know, declares himself on several occasions *destitute of divine Inspiration*. In the *Epistle to the Galatians*, I speak, says he, *after the manner of men* ². Where Jerom observes, that he makes good what he says, and by his low and vulgar reasoning, and the improper application of certain words, might have given offence to prudent men, had not he prefaced, as he does, by disavowing all pretence to Divine Inspiration ³.

Many facts and passages might be produced from the Old and New Testament, to shew, that the Sacred Writers could not be universally inspired: but I have said enough to declare my own opinion, as well as to give a short view of the grounds on which 'tis built, which I shall always be ready to explain more at large, if ever I am challenged to it by any Writer worth my notice.

I have now gone through all, that I found necessary to remark on your second Reply

¹ Luke i. 1, 2. Jo. xix. 35. it. xxi. 24. it. 1 Ep. Jo. i. 1, 2, 3.

² Gal. iii. 15. ³ Unde manifestum est, id fecisse Apostolum, quod promisit: nec reconditis ad Galatas usum effusibus, sed quotidianis & vilibus, & quæ possent, nisi præmisisset, *secundum hominem dico*, prudentibus displicere Hier. Comm. in Gal. 3. Op. T. 4.

What I have omitted to take notice of, was not for want of a proper answer, but that I thought it either too trifling to deserve any; or that it had been sufficiently answered before. And after all this squabbling, the state of the questions affirmed by me in the Dispute stands thus :

1. That *the Jews borrowed some of their Ceremonies and Customs from Ægypt.*
2. That *the Egyptians were in possession of Arts and Learning in Moses's time.*
3. That *the Primitive Writers, in order to vindicate Scripture, thought it necessary in some cases to recur to Allegory.*
4. That *the Scriptures are not of absolute and universal Inspiration.*

These are the *chief* if not the *only facts*, that I have in any manner declared for in my *Two Pieces*: and after all that has been said, I do not find the least reason to change my opinion in any of them: they all stand in the end of the Controversy, as firm as they did in the beginning; as every reader will observe: and what greater proof can be given of the impertinence of *Two Replies*, than that they have left the *principal Facts* in dispute in the same state as they found them? If therefore, Sir, you ever attempt a *third*, it will be expected, that you expressly and directly attack *these very Facts*, or else your attempt will be nothing at all to the purpose.

I must observe likewise, that, after all this *clamour and senseless charge of Infidelity*, I have shewn my Sentiments to be entirely agreeable, to what the *zealous and learned Advocates of Christianity* have clearly asserted in all ages, as necessary to a *rational defence of it*. If *Religion* indeed consists in what our *modern Apologists* seem to place it, the *depreciating moral Duties*, and the *depressing natural Reason*; if the *duty of it* be, what their practice seems to intimate, to *hate, and persecute for a different way of thinking* in points, where the best and wisest have never agreed; then I declare myself *an Infidel*, and to have no share of *that Religion*. But if to *live strictly and think freely*; to *practise what is moral*, and to *believe what is rational*, be consistent with the *sincere profession of Christianity*; then I shall always acquit myself like one of its truest Professors.

F I N I S.